



TOWN OF GROTON

GROTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



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Members of the Appropriations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly

Senator Cathy Osten, Senator Paul Formica, and Representative Toni Walker, Tri-Chairs

Subject: Restoration of Funding for borrowIT CT (formerly Connecticard) to the Connecticut State Library Budget

Submitted by: Betty Anne Reiter, Director of Library Services, Groton Public Library

Date: February 16, 2017

I am writing to you about a proposed cut in the State Library budget that will adversely affect the Groton Public Library and the citizens of Groton and the surrounding communities represented in your district. borrowIT CT (formerly Connecticard), the program that allows Connecticut residents to check out items from any public library in the state, has been completely eliminated from the FY2018 and FY2019 proposed budgets.

borrowIT CT is an example of a successful resource sharing program that has served our state well for 40 years. In fact, 15% of all circulation in Connecticut public libraries is by non-residents. Here in Groton, non-resident use accounts for closer to 30% of our circulation. If borrowIT CT funds are eliminated, non-residents will lose access to the Groton Public Library collection.

The funding we receive through participation in the borrowIT CT program funds our shared library catalog (with Waterford, Mystic & Noank and Bill Memorial Libraries), maintenance fees for software applications used by the public and equipment for our technology lab which supports technology training classes for area residents of all ages. Last year, we received \$28,947 in reimbursement for services provided to non-residents. The funding has dropped from \$0.28 per transaction in 2008 to \$0.22 per transaction. Although this reimbursement does not truly cover the cost of the service (a 2004 study found it to be \$1.05 per transaction), it is enough to make it feasible for libraries to participate.

Re-instating \$806,000 in the State Library budget will ensure that all residents of Connecticut are afforded equal access to library materials. Libraries have provided this access for four

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decades with the assistance of the borrowIT CT program but will be unable to continue if the funding is eliminated.

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